

TESTIMONY OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Judiciary Committee

Opposing:

[*S.B. No. 386](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY LAWS OF THIS STATE

Supporting:

[*S.B. No. 387](#) (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

March 13, 2022

Dear Chairs Senator Winfield and Representative Stafstrom:

My name is Leslie Weinberg and I am a Stamford citizen expressing my strong opposition for SB 386. This bill recommends creating a group that is inequitable and would aim to try to accomplish the same thing the states Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee does. This group would have a very small, hand-picked group of representatives who have “expertise in the laws of juvenile delinquency” designated by: Speaker of the House (currently Rep. Matt Ritter), the President Pro Tempore of the Senate (currently Sen. Martin Looney), the majority leader of the House (currently Rep. Jason Rojas), the majority leader of the Senate (currently Sen. Bob Duff), the minority leader of the House (currently Rep. Vincent Candelora), and the minority leader of the Senate (currently Sen. Kevin Kelly). This group does not consist of enough experts who work with young people or those directly impacted by the criminal system and would be non-inclusive and re-inventing a wheel that is already in place. Committee. We should only be making recommendations that aim to create successful futures for youth and families, not recommendations that will only create more adversities for children and families, specifically those in under-resourced, diverse communities. We have to do better at making sure we are creating solutions that aim to rehabilitate and help grow children, instead of pushing them deeper into the system and isolating them from ever being successful. This bill also makes some pretty concerning recommendations regarding our state’s gun laws. I am a concerned citizen who believes that background checks should apply to everyone and we need to do better. We can’t continue to make exceptions for only some.

I’d like to express my support for SB 387. Although the bill would be best if it was in its original, strongest form, SB 387 speaks to the years, and intensive ongoing work of the JJPOC. The JJPOC is composed of experts from all fields related to juvenile justice including state agencies, youth and parents that are directly impacted, educators,

providers, advocates, and more. The JJPOC bill has recommendations that were created with all perspectives taken into consideration and goes through a thorough workgroup process annually that results in annual recommendations. SB 387 is composed of important recommendations that move the needle closer to solution-based ways to address youth crime and ultimately divert youth from the legal system. HB 5418 recommends eliminating the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee which means eliminating one of the state's only inclusive appointed legislative bodies, undoing years of progress toward creating more successful ways to address youth justice alongside those impacted the most by the legal system.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit written testimony as I navigate regular day-to-day responsibilities. Feel free to reach out to the CT Justice Alliance to reach me or have more conversations about these issues.

Leslie Weinberg